THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. ABRAR AHMED): (a) and (b) Trade deficit, external debt and debt servicing ratio for the years 1990-91 to 1992-93 are given below:

	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93
Trade deficit (DGCI&S) (US $ million)	5.93	1.61	3.30
Year-end non-defence external debt (revised classification) US $ million	63.37	67.56	70.35
Debt service ratio (non-defence debt service payments as per cent of current receipts)	25.8	25.1	25.6

(c) and (d) The trade deficit is expected to decline in 1993-94 from the level of 1992-93. The growth in external debt is expected to decline in 1993-94 with an expected decline in current account deficit. The debt service ratio has stabilised and is not expected to rise in 1993-94.

Financial Assistance to States for Flood Relief Measures

3715. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to amend the rules provided under the Ninth Finance Commission for financial assistance to States for flood relief measures; and

(b) if so, by when and if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Calamity Relief Fund was set up on the recommendations of the Ninth Finance Commission with effect from 1-4-1990 and will remain in force upto 1994-95. One of the terms of reference of Tenth Finance Commission is to review the present Scheme of Calamity Relief Fund and to make appropriate recommendations thereon. Therefore the question of amending the rules does not arise.

Merger of New Bank of India with Punjab National Bank

3716. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to merge New Bank of India with Punjab National Bank;

(b) if so, what are the factors that have weighed with Government to merge these two banks;

(c) what are other proposals in this regard, under Government's consideration; and

(d) what is the criteria likely to be followed in the cases of merger of banks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. ABRAR AHMED): (a) to (d) A proposal for merger of one nationalised bank with another nationalised bank is under consideration. It will not be in public interest to disclose the details of the proposal at this stage.

Government have also received a proposal from the State Bank of India for the merger of its seven Associate Banks into a single Associate Bank. Government have solicited the views of Reserve Bank of India on the proposal.